

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3930

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 8476

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ASEC, EINV, VE

SUBJECT: NIEHOUS KIDNAPPING

1. BILL COLEMAN OF OWENS-ILLINOIS AND JAKE LONGAN CAME TO THE EMBASSY TO DISCUSS SUBJECT CASE. LONGAN STATED THAT THREE MORE LETTERS FROM WILLIAM NIEHOUS DATED JULY 1, 4 AND 5 RESPECTIVELY AND ONE LETTER FROM THE KIDNAPPERS WERE RECEIVED ON FRIDAY, JULY 9. THE LETTER FROM THE KIDNAPPERS ASKS FOR PAYMENT OF BS ON HUNDRED THOUSAND IN COUNTRY, THE REST TO BE PAID ABROAD. THE MONEY IS TO BE GIVEN TO VENEZUELAN INDUSTRIALIST EMILIO CONDE JAHN. INTERESTINGLY, CONDE JAHN HAS REFUSED TO TRANSMIT THE LETTER FROM DONNA NIEHOUS THAT THE KIDNAPPERS HAD OFFERED TO DELIVER TO HER HUSBAND. TERRY CANAVEN NEVE KEPT HIS APPOINTMENT WITH URD DEPUTY FORTUNATO HERRERA LAST WEEK BECAUSE OF THE TEMPORARY UNAVAILABILITY OF ERASTO FERNANDEZ.

2. COLEMAN AND LONGAN ARE MEETING THIS EVENING WITH ERASTO FERNANDEZ AND ARISTIDIS LANDER, NEW DIRECTOR OF DISIP, TO DISCUSS THE LATEST COMMUNICATION FROM THE KIDNAPPERS. WE GATHER THAT THE POLICE ARE PREPARED TO PERMIT A "CONTROLLED" PAYMENT OF RANSOM. WE RECEIVED THE IMPRESSION THAT THE COMPANY WOULD BE PREPARED TO PUT UP THE MONEY IF THEY COULD BE ASSURED SOMEHOW THAT THE

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POLICE WOULD NOT BUNGLER THE OPERATION AND PLACE

NIEHOUS IN JEOPARDY.

3. IN ADDITION, JAKE LONGAN WAS IN TOUCH WITH
BOTH ERASTO FERNANDEZ AND ARISTIDIS LANDER ON
FRIDAY AND DISCUSSED IN SOME DETAIL THE CHARGE'S
MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR.
LONGAN INFORMED FERNANDEZ AND LANDER THAT OWENS-
ILLINOIS WOULD BE PREPARED TO MAKE AVAILABLE
TECHNOLOGY AND EXPERTISE IN ORDER TO FILL ANY
GAPS NOT COVERED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.
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